Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A rechargeable battery having a cover, the rechargeable battery comprising:

at least one connecting pole comprising a pole shank inserted into a pole sleeve having an inner surface, the connecting pole being closed from the outside of the rechargeable battery such that the rechargeable battery is liquid-tight and gas-tight;

wherein the pole sleeve is electrically conductively connected to the pole shank and is held in a liquid-tight and gas-tight manner by the cover;

wherein a first section of the pole shank is electrically conductively connected in a gas-tight and liquid-tight manner to the inner surface of the pole sleeve; and

further comprising a sliding element provided between a second section of the pole shank and the inner surface of the pole sleeve;

wherein the diameter of the first section is smaller than the diameter of the second section.

2. (Original) The rechargeable battery of Claim 1 wherein the first section is provided toward a free end of the pole shank and the sliding element is surrounded at least in places by an attachment section of the pole sleeve which is used to attach the pole sleeve to the cover.

3. (Original) The rechargeable battery of Claim 1 wherein the sliding element is provided in the form of an insert in the pole sleeve.

4. (Original) The rechargeable battery of Claim 1 wherein the sliding element is integrally formed on the cover.

5. (Original) The rechargeable battery of Claim 1 wherein the sliding element is provided in the form of a covering on the pole shank.

6. (Original) The rechargeable battery of Claim 1 wherein the sliding element is provided in the form of a coating on the pole shank.

7. (Previously Presented) The rechargeable battery of Claim 1 wherein the pole sleeve comprises an insertion opening formed by a circumferential incline which enlarges the internal diameter of the pole sleeve and wherein the sliding element is provided in the form of a ring which is provided on the insertion opening in the pole sleeve.

8. (Original) The rechargeable battery of Claim 1 wherein the sliding element is formed from plastic.

9. (New) A rechargeable battery having a cover, the rechargeable battery comprising:

at least one connecting pole comprising a pole shank inserted into a pole sleeve having an inner surface, the connecting pole being closed from the outside of the rechargeable battery such that the rechargeable battery is liquid-tight and gas-tight;

wherein the pole sleeve is electrically conductively connected to the pole shank and is held in a liquid-tight and gas-tight manner by the cover;

wherein a first section of the pole shank is electrically conductively connected in a gas-tight and liquid-tight manner to the inner surface of the pole sleeve; and

further comprising a sliding element provided between a second section of the pole shank and the inner surface of the pole sleeve;

wherein the diameter of the first section is smaller than the diameter of the second section; and

wherein the sliding element is formed from polypropylene and is configured to reduce the sliding friction between the pole shank and the pole sleeve during insertion of the pole shank into the pole sleeve.

10. (New) A rechargeable battery having a cover, the rechargeable battery comprising:

at least one connecting pole comprising a pole shank inserted into a pole sleeve having an inner surface, the connecting pole being closed from the outside of the rechargeable battery such that the rechargeable battery is liquid-tight and gas-tight;

wherein the pole sleeve is electrically conductively connected to the pole shank and is held in a liquid-tight and gas-tight manner by the cover;

wherein a first section of the pole shank is electrically conductively connected in a gas-tight and liquid-tight manner to the inner surface of the pole sleeve; and

further comprising a sliding element provided between a second section of the pole shank and the inner surface of the pole sleeve;

wherein the diameter of the first section is smaller than the diameter of the second section; and

wherein the first section and the pole sleeve are configured so that an intermediate space is formed between the first section and the pole sleeve when the pole shank is inserted into the pole sleeve.

11. (New) the rechargeable battery of Claim 10 wherein a lead solder is provided in the intermediate space to electrically conductively connect the first section to the pole sleeve.

12. (New) The rechargeable battery of Claim 11 wherein the first and second sections are substantially cylindrical.